

# *To the Chairman and Members of the Hardingstone Rural District Council.*

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FEBRUARY, 1915.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1914, with the usual Tables. In estimating the population of the district I have allowed for a slight decrease in conformity with the finding of the last Census.

The total number of births was 153, namely, 84 boys and 69 girls. This is not so many as last year, when there were 167 births; but it comes next in the list of the last six years and gives a ratio of 20 per 1,000: this has been as low as 16·3 per 1,000.

The total number of deaths at all ages was 92, which is a fairly low average. In the preceding year the number was very high (119). This gives a ratio per 1,000 for 1914 of 12·2. Of these deaths no less than 21 were of persons over 80 years of age. There were only four deaths from infectious disease, one from whooping cough and three from diphtheria—these are referred to more fully hereafter. There were only four deaths from tuberculous disease against nine in the previous year. Twelve deaths were due to various lung complaints, against 23 in 1913. There were seven deaths from cancer, which seems about the average, and two from diarrhœa, only one of which was an infant.

The number of deaths in children under one year of age was 11, giving a ratio per 1,000 births of 71. Last year there were 14 deaths amongst children. There was no particular cause for these deaths, the 11 cases being divided amongst eight different diseases, as shown in Table IV.

Table II. shows the number of cases of infectious disease notified during the year. Excluding the three cases of chicken pox, there were only 32 cases, compared with 48 last year. There was only one case of enteric reported, and the other cases were nearly equally divided between scarlet fever and diphtheria. No case of erysipelas or puerperal fever has been notified. The enteric fever patient did not contract the disease in our district. He was an assistant master in a school at Towcester, and came to spend the holidays with an uncle at Rothersthorpe, when he was certified as suffering from enteric fever. He was very ill for some time but eventually recovered. I have heard since that the doctor said it was a very doubtful case, and I do not know whether it should be registered at all in this district.

Thirteen cases of diphtheria were reported, and of these three were fatal. Two of these occurred at the beginning of the year in school children of the same class at Hackleton Schools. The water supply in the cottage of the first case was probably contaminated, and the second case, in all likelihood, caught the disease from this one; both were very mild cases. There was a very mild epidemic at Hardingstone, in October. The first case was not diagnosed, and I found on visiting the second case (his brother) that there was a lot of discharge from the first brother's nose. The epidemic spread among the school children, and on closing the schools no further cases occurred. Two cases occurred at a lone cottage at Milton Ham. The first case was not notified till death had occurred; his brother contracted the disease but was immediately injected with serum, as well as all the other inmates of the cottage, and this at once stopped the spread. The cause seemed to me to be due to the state of the drinking water from a very old well, which has now been closed, and a fresh supply provided. The other cases occurred sporadically at Roade, and two were fatal. It seemed to be spreading amongst the school children, and since closing the schools no fresh cases have been notified. The drainage of this village is not very perfect; the fall is hardly sufficient, so that the drains get easily choked, though they are frequently flushed. Unfortunately, I do not see how this can be remedied without an entirely fresh system of drainage, and the present one was laid down at considerable cost. It may be noted, that this year a large number of cases of diphtheria have been reported generally throughout the town and county of Northampton.

Of the 12 cases of scarlet fever notified there is little to say. They were scattered over most of the villages in the district, were of a very mild type, and none of them were fatal. Eleven of these cases of scarlet fever were isolated at our Hospital during the year, and also one from the Northampton Rural District and one from the Towcester Rural District.

There was one death from whooping cough, and one case of anthrax was reported in a beast in the parish of Milton.

The Schools at Hardingstone and Roade were closed on account of the diphtheria outbreaks in those villages, and the Rothersthorpe School, on account of an epidemic of whooping cough.

Four cases of pulmonary tuberculosis have been notified. One was under treatment at the Northampton General Hospital and one was recommended for Sanatorium treatment, the other two were treated at home. One case of tuberculosis of the mesenteric glands was reported from the Northampton General Hospital: these were all adults. One case of tuberculosis of the cervical spine in a child was also notified by the School Medical Inspector. The three deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis occurred in patients who had been notified in the previous year. The provision of a County Sanatorium has not yet been decided.

#### *Housing and Town Planning Acts.*

|  |     |     |     |       |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number of houses inspected               | ... | ... | ... | 394   |
| „ „ unfit for habitation                 | ... | ... | ... | 1     |
| „ closing orders made                    | ... | ... | ... | 0     |
| „ houses remedied without closing orders | ... | ... | ... | 1     |
| Defects remedied                         | ... | ... | ... | 158   |
| <hr/>                                    |     |     |     |       |
| Structural repairs—floors, roofs, &c.    | ... | ... | ... | 30    |
| Drains—repaired or connected to sewers   | ... | ... | ... | 11    |
| Filthy houses—cleaned, whitewashed, &c.  | ... | ... | ... | 59    |
| Yard pavings repaired or relaid          | ... | ... | ... | 16    |
| Cases of overcrowding                    | ... | ... | ... | 6     |
| Insanitary ashpits remedied              | ... | ... | ... | 17    |
| „ middens remedied or converted          | ... | ... | ... | 10    |
| Defective water supplies remedied        | ... | ... | ... | 9     |
|  |     |     |     | <hr/> |
|  |     |     |     | 158   |
|  |     |     |     | <hr/> |

Two prosecutions were carried out under the Public Health Act—one for failing to clean and whitewash a house after notice, and one for overcrowding. In each case the Magistrates made an order to abate the nuisance within twenty-one days, with costs—10/-.

Plans for the erection of nine new houses and two bakehouses have been passed by the Council. Seven houses and one bakehouse have been built, and two houses and one bakehouse are in course of erection.

#### *Sanitary Inspector's Report.*

|                      |     |     | Inspections. |     | Notices. |
|----------------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|----------|
| Dairies and Cowsheds | ... | ... | 72           | ... | 8        |
| Slaughter-houses     | ... | ... | 45           | ... | 7        |
| Bakehouses           | ... | ... | 40           | ... | 6        |
| Workshops            | ... | ... | 17           | ... | 5        |
| Closets and Ashpits  | ... | ... | 6            | ... | 5        |
| Drains repaired, &c. | ... | ... | 11           | ... | 3        |
| Pigsties             | ... | ... | 4            | ... | 1        |

The notices in the first four classes were all on account of whitewashing and insufficient ventilation.

The slaughter-houses were visited as often as possible when slaughtering was in progress, and no diseased or doubtful carcasses were found.

Besides the above, the following matters have received attention :—

- Four foul ditches cleaned ;
- One village pond cleaned ;
- Two new closets built ;
- Thirty houses and three schools disinfected and cleaned after infectious disease.

*Sewage Schemes.*—The Piddington scheme is satisfactory, except that children interfere with it at times. It requires fencing to keep them away.

At Little Houghton, owing to the large amount of storm water, at times the filtering was not sufficient. Sludge tanks and storm-water filters have been added and the working is now satisfactory.

The alterations made to the Roade sewage beds last year have worked well and no complaints have been made about them.

Minor repairs and alterations have been made at Milton and Rothersthorpe which have made these schemes more effective, and the flushing of the sewers in all the villages is carried out periodically.

*Water Supply.*—There has been no complaint of shortage of water, except at Wootton. Two additional wells have been opened which had been disused for some years and the supply is now ample.

At Denton, the storage tanks were not of sufficient capacity, so a new tank to hold 10,000 gallons has been added at a cost approximately of £100.

Seven samples of water have been analyzed—four were good and three were reported as unfit for consumption. Of the latter, two were taken from the same well and the well has been closed, and in the other case a new supply has been provided.

*Offensive Trades.*—There are works for three of this class of trade in the district—gnt-scraping, tallow melting, and horse slaughtering. Eighteen visits were made to these premises and they were found kept in a good condition and no complaints have been made about them. In the case of gnt-scraping, septic tanks have been built to take all the refuse, instead of putting it on the land, a proceeding which threatened soon to become a nuisance.

*Petroleum Act.*—There are ten houses under this Act in the district—

- 5 for keeping and storing of Carbide of Calcium ;
- 1 for storing and sale of Carbide of Calcium ;
- 3 for storing and sale of Petrol ;
- 1 for storing of Petrol.

These are all visited and the terms of the licenses have been complied with.

One house intended for the accommodation of Belgian Refugees has been inspected and found suitable.

*Housing Accommodation.*—This was so fully reported on last year that there are very few remarks to be added. No less than 394 houses have been inspected by the Sanitary Inspector during the year, and I have incorporated these in continuation of the list made last year, making it much more complete. This shows that the two-bedroom class is much the most common, but there are a fair number with three or more bedrooms. The cottages with only one bedroom are almost invariably occupied by only one person, or one married couple—it is very rare to find any overcrowding in this class. The rents vary very much. Many of the best cottages are owned by the Marquis of Northampton, and a cottage with two or even three bedrooms is let here at only 6d. or 1/- per week. The rent varies chiefly with the nearness to

the town of Northampton—the rents at Wootton and Hardingstone, close to the town, are much higher than those at a greater distance : 3/- to 4/- per week is often paid here for a cottage of only two bedrooms.

#### COTTAGES IN HARDINGSTONE RURAL DISTRICT.

|       |              |   |         |     |     |     |     |
|-------|--------------|---|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1     | Sitting Room | 1 | Bedroom | ... | ... | ... | 50  |
| 1     | "            | 2 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 112 |
| 1     | "            | 3 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 9   |
| 2     | "            | 1 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 3   |
| 2     | "            | 2 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 167 |
| 2     | "            | 3 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 73  |
| 2     | "            | 4 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 13  |
| 3     | "            | 3 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 21  |
| 3     | "            | 4 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 7   |
| 4     | "            | 2 | "       | ... | ... | ... | 2   |
| Total |              |   |         |     |     |     | 457 |

#### RENTS.

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Under 1/- per week | ... | ... | ... | ... | 63  |
| 1/3 per week       | ... | ... | ... | ... | 39  |
| 1/6 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 56  |
| 1/7 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 25  |
| 1/9 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 36  |
| 2/- "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 67  |
| 2/3 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31  |
| 2/6 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 46  |
| 3/- "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 42  |
| 3/6 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 25  |
| 4/- "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 7   |
| 4/6 "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3   |
| 5/- "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1   |
| 6/- "              | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3   |
| Total              |     |     |     |     | 444 |

*Midwifery Acts.*—No cases of puerperal fever have been reported this year. The Notification of Births Act has not yet been adopted in this district.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

G. H. PERCIVAL,

Medical Officer of Health.